

HISTORICAL ESSAY

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ON
MR, ADDISON.



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PREFATORY ADVERTISEMENT.

THE writer of this Effay does not publicly avow himself the author. He does not think himself amenable at the Oyer and Terminer of Apollo, in Boccalini's Court of Parnassus. Such a judgement as Sherlock the traveller passes on Lord Chesterfield's letters, in the courts below, is enough to terrify a writer from giving his name to a reader. This censurer pronounces of these patrician performances, that "what in them is new, is not good; and what is good, is not new."—The materials for this composition are in every body's hands, and

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have

have been often used. There are not above three or four facts that are not already collected respecting Addison. This piece is rather a rhapsody than an history, and perhaps is more singular in the manner, than interesting in its matter. It would have been better undoubtedly if the Essay had not been written at all, or never found its way out of the book-room to the printing-press. For Dr. Johnson, the last and best historian and critic, has told all that is worth knowing about Addison, and in his best manner. His biographical preface is massy gold: this is only gold-leaf.

This Essay is not for the world at large: but only for the little world of the writer's acquaintance. To them he has committed himself before. This is probably the last time. These few

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printed sheets he presents, as he would a manuscript, not fit nor safe to be trusted out of their sight or out of their hands—lest they should fall into the hands of criticism. This writer is ashamed of producing an historical effusion, that may not contain information to the ignorant, nor yet give satisfaction to the well-informed. He readily condemns the general practice of writing one book from another; and yet is certainly guilty of that fault, if it is not a crime, himself. “I cull, says Montaigne, here and there, out of several books, such sentences as please me; not to keep them in my *memory*, but to transplant them into this work; where, to say the truth, they are no more mine than they were in the places from whence I took them.” Let this pass for a confession and an apology. Such a subject as that
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of Addison is old to almost every reader. Each precursory account of him stands in the way of every succeeding pen. But Addison and his writings have been the favourites of the youth and the advanced age of this dealer in Anecdotes; the small ware of History;

“ Grew with his growth, and strengthened with his strength.”

He has *given his days and nights to Addison*; and now shall think himself well off, if this private *exhibition* is not thought totally unworthy of the Addisonian School.

A D D I S O N.

AN intimate acquaintance of Dr. Johnson (why should not the reader know it was the author of this essay?) advised him to set about writing his own life, as soon as he concluded the biography of the English poets: for, if he totally neglected it, somebody might write it for him. A departed author and all that he leaves behind him are considered as much the property of a harpy pen, as a Cornish shipwreck or a herriot the rightful claim of the lord of the manor. To obviate this inconvenience and injury, David Hume, just before it was too late, composed an account of himself; telling the world perhaps nothing that was false, but probably concealing many things, which, if viewed through the wrong end of the perspective, he fancied might make against him. For no man is obliged to become his own accuser, or be an evidence against himself. His article in the

Biographia will probably enter into more particulars of his life and opinions. On the possibility of Rousseau's outliving him (the public is reading at this time the first part of Rousseau's life written by himself with different degrees of approbation) he thought it worth his while to publish a defence of his conduct towards that great genius and unhappy man (whom he brought into England) who gave out, that the whole world was in a conspiracy against his life and his independence. Hume (who says, he was never attacked by the baleful tooth of calumny) acknowledges he was afraid of the power of his eloquence, which might make more converts than his arguments. Our passions are convinced before our reason, which is too often made a dupe of. No court but that of Areopagus (annihilated by the popular Pericles) has set it's face against the seduction of oratory. Tropes and figures take the hearer and reader by storm. We must be chained to the mast, if we are determined to hear the music of the Syrens. Hume resolved to have the first word against Rousseau, which in some cases prevents the ill effects of the last, and lodged an appeal in his own favour. De Retz thinks that

that every statesman should be his own historian, provided he has candour enough to confess the errors of his conduct; since no one can know the truth so well as himself. Voltaire praises his ingenuoufness and the dignity of his mind. Ramsay in his life of Turenne condemns the Cardinal and his memoirs. In our own times Lord Chesterfield recommends the study of them to his own Son. It is difficult, says the *melancholy* Cowley, for a man to speak of himself, though it is necessary on some occasions not to be silent. Even a little vanity, that frequent spur to splendid actions, is to be pardoned, when an illustrious servant of the public is obliged to enter into a long defensive narrative. Who is more agreeable than Cicero, Lord Herbert, Cornaro, Sir William Temple, Montagne, Clarendon, Cowley, or even Colley Cibber?

If Mr. Addison, the intended hero of this essay, had been the Plutarch of his own life (for Plutarch enters into a thousand interesting particulars and brings his hero into the closet) it must have made an entertaining volume; though the modesty and diffidence that accompanied him through every scene of life, would have prevented him from enlarging on

a multitude of things to his own glory and the disadvantage of others. For on many occasions he chose rather to hide himself than be seen, and to practise reserve than to open his lips; and, like his patron Lord Somers, even to perform services to others without being paid for them, or wanting to have them talked of. As he possessed the art of writing agreeably on all occasions, we should have been glad of reading his account of himself and his contemporaries. But it probably never entered into his head to be his own historian. He did not want to erect trophies to his own praise: he had no atrocious accusations to vindicate himself from, nor malignant charges that called for a posthumous defence from the hand of friendship. None but a Cicero can require or solicit a Luceius. Addison trusted his character to the world as soon as he was gone, as he well might. He did not desire the intervention of a few years, which Lord Bacon demands for his own name, before he gave it to his countrymen.

What Addison did not think fit to do for himself, has been often done for him. To Mr. Tickell his fellow collegian at Queen's (for Addison went from thence a Demy to Maudlin) and his under secretary, he entrusted an

edition of his works, which appeared in four quarto volumes in 1721, for which he prepared a dedication to his successor Mr Craggs, to whose patronage he consigned the editor. During their publication (which was by subscription, and was honoured with the names of all the foreign ministers) a succession of unexpected death befel all the parties concerned but Tickell. The reader shall have them in the words of Pope from a letter to Atterbury. “ I cannot but think it a very
 “ odd set of incidents, that the book (Addi-
 “ son’s) should be dedicated by a dead man
 “ (Addison) to a dead man (Craggs) and
 “ even that the new patron (Warwick) to
 “ whom Tickell chose to inscribe his verses,
 “ should be dead also before they were pub-
 “ lished.” Such were thy triumphs, O
 Death, over youth and merit! Warwick, who
 was esteemed a man of great parts, was car-
 ried off by a high fever, and Craggs by the
 small pox. Lady M. Wortley Montague had
 not as yet brought into England with her
 the art of inoculation from Turkey, to pre-
 vent the bad effects of it in the natural way.

Craggs was one of the first characters of
 the age, and had distinguished himself in the
 house of Commons. “ Let him but find

“abilities, says Lord Sunderland, and I will
 “give him consequence.” The classical names
 of Damon and Pythias, of Pylades and Ores-
 tes, and Nisus and Euryalus, did not go oftener
 together in ancient story, than those of Addi-
 son and Craggs in the real life of modern
 times. Craggs seems to have had but one
 infirmity, which is come to this writer’s
 knowledge very lately and from good autho-
 rity. He was ashamed of the meanness of his
 birth (which Addison calls *a vicious mo-
 desty*); for his father, though by merit
 raised to be post master general and to be home
 agent to the Duke of Marlborough; had
 been only a *Barber*, the reflection of which
 tormented him through life. Better certainly
 to be the first man of a family, than the last;
 as has been often said. The man of Arpinum
 was superior to the proudest peer of Rome.
 The conclusion of the jocular epitaph of
 Prior (who had himself been a tavern-boy)
 is a complete victory over nobility of birth,

“The son of Adam and of Eve—

“Let Bourbon or Nassau go higher.”

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The democratic couplet of the *old Levellers* shall have a place, as there is room for it,

“ When Adam delv’d and Eve span,
Who was then a Gentleman ?

Craggs, just before he was attacked by his last illness, accepted the recommendation of Pope to employ Fenton to instruct him in Greek. Not surely for the purpose of making him relish his translation of Homer the better, for that is best read as an original poem. Cato the Censor (if it is not pedantry to mention it) learned Greek as a living language (for it was as general as the French is become to all statesmen) which our senator was about to study as a dead one. Colbert is said to have learned Latin after he became prime minister. Craggs died at twenty eight and unmarried. Contemporary scandal gave out that he was attached to a Lady of very high quality. “ Her name,” to use the expression of the grave historian Lord Clarendon on a similar occasion, “ shall not be divulged in this place.” His early appointment to be Secretary of State, that of Lord Bolingbroke to the same office, and of Mr. Pitt to be Chancellor of the Ex-

chequer, arerarities of premature abilities. Tho' the fruits appeared, the blossoms were not gone. The reader might have had more of Craggs, if the Harleian manuscripts, N^o 7523. had been consulted: but he may possibly think he has more than enough already. For the episode may be too large for the main story.

The celebrated Arthur Moore (a character very unlike Craggs, for he probably never knew what *shame* was in the course of his life) rose, says Burnet, from being a footman, to be a lord of trade. His servitude was overlooked by his party, when his merit was rewarded. He was a person of so much dexterity in business that he eclipsed or got before most other men of his time. He was to have been Chancellor of the Exchequer in Lord Bolingbroke's administration, if the Queen had not died. At the accession, indeed he was *proscribed*. For he was charged with touching some French or Spanish gold; (Lord Oxford also asserts, in his letter to the Queen, the public was cheated of twenty thousand pounds, where Moore was concerned), and it was said of him, *vendidit hic auro patriam*. Mr. Speaker Onflow, his
pro-

provincial neighbour, describes him, in a marginal remark on the Bishop's history, as one of notable talents, and of a most agreeable conversation, and says, that he sunk all at once in mind, body, and fortune.

If Addison can be supposed to be thinking of this person when he wrote the humorous trial of Count Tariff, on the accusation of Goodman Fact, what is just said may not seem to be beside the title of this piece.

Tickell was amply provided for in Ireland, was a good Whig, and died with an unblemished reputation. Mr. Tickell, one of the favourite writers of the town, and a man of genius and vivacity, is the grandson of this friend of Addison. To the edition of Addison's works above mentioned was prefixed the first historical account of the author. It dealt enough in praise, which the subject well deserved, from a reviewer of his benefactor's life. It told little more than all his contemporaries knew. But that becomes history to the present age. The delicacy of his situation and the recency of several matters might prevent him from entering into many particulars. He was rather too

near

near than too far distant from events to tell all the truth. As a writer perhaps he performed his best. Steele, who seems to resent the preference shewn to Tickell, speaks but indifferently of the biography, and is very free with the edition, on account of omissions and of commissions. Before the play of the Drummer (of which he seems to have had the property) in a letter to Mr. Congreve, he complains as if he had received an injury, and treats Tickell with contempt, as if he knew nothing of his hero or his performances. Steele asserts, that Tickell, "who had been daily and hourly with one of the greatest men of the age, satisfied himself with saying nothing of him, but what every body knew, except a particularity, and that to his disadvantage, which he, his friend from a boy, does not know to be true—that *he never had a regular pulse.*"

Tickell had omitted the comedy of the Drummer, and assigned some pieces to Addison, that Steele had taken upon himself to be the author of, and to be answerable for, in order to screen his friend. "I hope now, says Steele, the persons who are satirized will
restore

restore me their good will." A couplet from Swift becomes applicable, as it is spiteful:

" Thus Steele, who own'd what others writ,
And flourish'd by imputed wit."

But, on recollection, Swift most likely had Steele in his eye, for publishing a celebrated, grave, ironical, dedication to the Pope, well known to be written by Bishop Hoadly, and letting it pass for his own.—But Steele had wit enough of his own to carry on the author's trade, though he accepted the accidental bounty of a friend. Steele promises to give the town a more particular account of Addison and of his genius, which was original. Of his genius, his acquirements, his temper, his passions, and his difference from other men, he might have been able to have told a great deal, and would have told it well. He had also the advantage of being his school-fellow at the Charter house. As he had passed so many literary and convivial hours with him, he must have had opportunities of remarking his peculiarities, and have discovered the inmost recesses and sources of his wit. He who had seen him so often,

" In all his humours, whether grave or mellow,"
must

must have been in possession of good materials. But what the bottle tells (which is generally a great tell-tale) perhaps it is the duty of friendship to keep secret. It was then, as Steele observes to Congreve, he fancied himself in company with an intimate acquaintance of Terence and Catullus. When heated with wine, his wit ran over, and he exemplified the observation on the flying fish, which, in the line of the poet, "soars highest when it's wings are wet." What cooled the warmth of Sir Richard's inclinations to describe his companion, it is too late to enquire. Steele about this time, as Swift unmercifully expresses it of his once familiar acquaintance till party made them enemies,

"From perils of a hundred jails,
Withdrew to starve and die in Wales."

Addison's article from the General Dictionary is reprinted in a small octavo, there being a demand for it; and his life is copiously and correctly written in the Biographia. It has been scribbled over and over again in magazines of all titles, and will be written and

"wallow in a grave or in a well," re-
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reprinted as long as authors employ book-sellers, and book-sellers can find authors. This historical Essay follows the biographical and critical preface of Dr. Johnson, who has remarked with his usual acuteness on his writings, and given his life with impartiality, though Addison was a Whig. But his religious principles are so high in his favour, that his political ones receive the less animadversion. To take up a pen after this author would be presumption (though it were only for a few confidential readers), if the design were not to enquire after anecdotes that may have escaped the notice of former collectors, and to endeavour to say something that has not been said before. The reader, who thinks he is in possession of all that is to be known, might otherwise wonder at such a ramble of the pen, for so beaten a topic :

“ For what so tedious as a twice-told tale ? ”

Possibly Time, who like Janus has two faces to look forward and retrospectively, and whose daughter is Truth, may have employed it to develope something that has not been brought

brought to light. Every incident relative to a great man contains a degree of importance, and ought to be saved from oblivion. A printed sheet that presents a single occurrence, which is new to the ear or to the eye, and does honour to the subject, and to human nature, ought to be rescued from becoming waste paper.—Most characters require the palliation of apology rather than the partiality of panegyrick. For who have lived with so much caution and propriety as to deserve commendation for every thing they have said or done? How few can affirm of the best of their acquaintance, as Mr. Locke does of Dr. Pocock, that in the course of a long and exact knowledge of him, he never heard nor saw him do or say any thing unworthy of his profession or character? Let Locke himself come in for a share of this sort of commendation. Bishop Fell employed spies upon his conduct and conversation, in order to make or find a sufficient excuse for his expulsion from his studentship of Christ-Church, on account of his attachment to Lord Shaftesbury. Locke must have been circumspection itself, “*silence watching o’er his lips,*”

for

for Fell gave up at last the inquisitorial employment he had long held, and reported to Lord Sunderland his bad success, for, *that so great a master of taciturnity and passion never existed*. Every great man would do well to fancy the satirist and historian at his elbow, to notify his conduct and to proclaim his actions. What will posterity think of me? would be a proper question, as a spur and a check for most men. Addison's tongue was as little a blab as most men's. He was able almost to set observation at defiance: grave even to prudery, and absent though present (but not in mind, like Bruyere's absentee in the Spectator) amongst strangers, and never perhaps off his guard even at the *Club*, though the *leges convivales* generally justify it. Mandeville, the entertaining but the immoral author of the Fable of the Bees, who had passed an evening with Addison at Lord Macclesfield's, observed characteristically of him, *that he was a clergyman in a tye wig*. Perhaps he kept his mouth shut more closely than usual, and more than he had been used to do under the roof of Lord Somers. Addison had just before drawn the preamble to the new

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Chancellor's patent. — If Mr. Addison had more of the church than the state in his countenance, it is no wonder, since his father, who was Dean of Litchfield, designed him for an ecclesiastic.

Addison (at length begins his personal history) was born at Milston, near Ambresbury, in 1672. He had all the external appearance of a very short life. Unless we are misinformed, he was laid out for dead (as is said of Lord Lyttelton) as soon as he was born. It certainly does not appear that he came into the world before his time, or that his mother miscarried of him, as was the case with Hobbes of Malmesbury, by his mother's fright on account of the Spanish Armada, 1588. Notwithstanding that accident, the philosopher lived beyond ninety; and too long, if, as reported, he was afraid of death and the dark, which had no terrors for the Christian Addison.

Addison lived not half the days of Hobbes, but to much better purpose, by his precept and example; and did more good with his pen, during his short life, than Hobbes had done mischief; which is saying a great deal;

deal: for his countryman was much read and admired by his contemporaries, had great friends and great enemies; and wrote with a remarkable felicity of expression. In this talent, as well as in the purity of morals and politics (in one of which Hobbes is said to make mankind licentious, and in the other slaves) Addison, the subject of this rhapsody, excelled him. The fame of Hobbes is decaying very fast, while Addison, according to the observation of David Hume (no cowardly philosopher with regard to death or darkness) will be read with pleasure, when [even] Locke shall be entirely forgotten.

He went a good classic scholar to the university about fifteen, where in a few years he obtained a reputation by his Latin and his English poetry. It is said that the Saturday's papers in the Spectator, were subjects and parts of his intended sermons, if he had taken orders. Lord Halifax, to whom he was introduced by Congreve, dedicated him to the State, and said, he should never do the Church any other harm, than in keeping Mr Addison out of it. At the age of twenty two, he wrote a copy of verses to Dryden, and

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afterward assisted him with an essay on the Georgics and the arguments to the books of Virgil. Dryden, whose praise was fame, called him, in a preface, "the most ingenious " Mr Addison of Oxford." His account in verse of the English poets (a poor account indeed, and descriptive of Spenser, whose poems it seems he had not then read) he addressed to Sacheverell, whose sister it was said he was courting. Whatever truth there may be in that tradition, he renounced both brother and sister, for other connexions and pursuits. In the following year, says the entertaining Campbell, he began to have higher views, for he composed a poem to King William, and addressed it to Lord Keeper Somers, who now desired his acquaintance. Somers became his patron through life; and Addison remembered and repaid it, in an elegant and just tribute to his memory, in the Freeholder. He had dedicated his Travels and the first volume of the Spectator to that great man. Finding Mr. Addison with strong inclinations to travel, he procured him an annual pension of 300*l.* for that purpose. He visited Boileau at Paris, and made him a present
of

of the *Musæ Anglicanæ*, which contained his Latin poems. This gave Boileau the first proof of the turn of Englishmen towards poetry, and their capacity for writing Latin verses. It does not appear that Boileau knew a syllable of English literature. This was the case with Fontenelle, whom Voltaire praises for his knowledge of the languages, as appears by a letter from Fontenelle to Lockman on his receiving his English version of Cupid and Psyche, which he dedicated to him. This was the case also with Rousseau, who tried, whilst in London, to learn English from grammar and from conversation. But he soon gave it up, as an insuperable difficulty. Addison continued a whole year at Blois, where the best French is spoken. He had occasion for that language as long as he lived. Jacob Tonson used to observe, whenever he came to Addison for the *Spectator*, that Bayle's French Historical and Critical Dictionary lay always open before him; and he became a constant reader of French books. He was to have continued longer abroad, and been appointed secretary to prince Eugene. But the death of King William, which he

heard of at Geneva, made a new arrangement, and put an end to his pension. At what time of his travels he became tutor to Lord Warwick, does not appear. Not having an historical guide, a poetical one must suffice. Swift in a poem in 1729 has these lines, applicable to this enquiry :

“ Thus Addison, by Lords carest,
Was left in foreign lands distrest,
Forgot at home, became for hire
! A travelling tutor to a 'Squire.”

His poetical letter from Italy to Lord Halifax (which was translated into Italian by Salvini) does honour to him as a poet and an Englishman. Liberty always came well out of his mouth and from his pen. Halifax was at this time removed from the ministry, in consequence of a vote, of what was called *the impeaching parliament*. The poet describes him, as quitting the public scene, for still life in the country. True and sarcastic is the couplet in Gay's fables,

“ Whene'er a statesman's out of place,
The country shelters his disgrace.”

But our poet is not ashamed of his patron.
Ambrose

Ambrose Philips writes a very poetical epistle (which has the praise of Pope for some of the lines) to the Duke of Dorset, from Copenhagen, where he resided in a public character, which is in the fashion at least of his friend Addison. But the images are from the North. Lady M. W. Montague has an elegant copy of verses, written and dated from the Chiafk at Pera, overlooking Constantinople. The poem of the Traveller, by this writer's late acquaintance Dr. Goldsmith, is a more laboured composition than any of the foregoing, and of the same complexion—

“Tho’ last, not least in love.”

Addison was about three years on his travels; and when he returned, in 1704, he discharged some old debts he had contracted at Oxford, and with the generosity of good interest. When he left England he was confessedly distressed in his circumstances, and did not return much richer; for it has been often asserted, that he was as poor as a church-mouse. He could not say, for a great while, in the line of Swift, “I’m poor, yet owe no man a groat.” He was now becoming a

town writer, and a favourite of the town, His literary ambition seemed to get the better of the bashfulness of his nature. He assumed, or had conferred upon him, the dictatorship in the republic of Letters, which displeased no one so much as Mr. Pope. Though perhaps it was not necessary for him to study, that he might live, as Lord Bacon expresses his own fears to King James, yet his friends, in the last stage of his life, wished that he might live, though it were only to write. Such a selfish expectation, real or imaginary, might induce Mr. Pope peevishly to exclaim,

“ Gods ! was I born for nothing but to write !

Whether the income of his places, and yet he was not always in place, was sufficient for his expences, and to enable him to get and to keep himself out of debt, it is too late or needless to enquire. Few men, who are at their ease, take up the pen, and fewer let their wit go into the world, any more than Lord Bacon did justice, *scot free*. If we can separate the character of the writer from the author, let the first be given to Addison. But this is not foppishly meant to depreciate authors

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by profession. Augustus often placed himself between Virgil and Horace. They had the address to be courtiers as well as poets. Our authors know how to make their way into Parliament, and to shine in Westminster-hall ; and then their fortunes are made. He who can talk as well as write like Cicero, may be what he pleases. A good book, like the handsome face to Queen Elizabeth, is a perpetual letter of recommendation. If I could be gratified in my wish, says a luminary of learning, the sword and the pen should be the only roads to consideration and greatness. But enough of this.

Addison was left, in the former page, more smiled upon by the god of wit than of riches. It is the fate of mere scholars, in which description Addison may as yet be included, to draw bills upon fortune, who never pays them at sight. Very few obtain a prize in the lottery of life, who even venture a ticket. Swift was obliged to save a thousand pounds when he resided at his Deanery, before he could call any thing his own. Pope, without his subscription to

Homer, could never have quitted Binfield, and have paid for the purchase of his house at Twickenham :

“ But, thanks to Homer, since I live and thrive,
“ Indebted to no prince or peer alive,”

says the poet briskly of himself. The first printed account of Addison supposes, that the death of his brother in the East Indies put him into plentiful circumstances ; perhaps enabled him to leave so good a fortune to his daughter. As none of his late biographers have mentioned his family, the reader shall be told, from Steele, that “ Dean Addison left behind him four children, each of whom, for excellent talents and singular perfections, were as much above the ordinary world, as their brother Joseph was above them.” Swift mentions to Stella his dining with one of his sisters, who, he says, resembled him. His mother, who outlived him, resided at Coventry ; he left her an annuity of fifty pounds a year in his will, which he made a month before he died. Addison was full of observation and curiosity whilst he continued abroad. It is rather the
taste

taste to depreciate his volume of travels. But they were well received by the public, and had a rapid sale. Does not Pope say somewhere, there is not an observation, that shews him to have been a judge, or a lover of the polite arts? The account of St. Marino has lately been allowed to be the only place of which he could not have written at home. Cardinal Alberoni, in our own times, occasioned that little republic to be much talked of. It is observable, that Addison makes no display of Italian literature, if he acquired any. Lord Orrery (and also Lord Chesterfield) in his epistolary Tour in Italy, seems to be sorry to be obliged to acknowledge there are so many mistakes in Addison's book, and says, he is beholden to Alberti for his mode of viewing Italy. Where was the necessity of pilfering a mode of observation from Alberti, and of seeing with his eyes, when he asserts, that before he left England, to refresh his memory, he read over all the poets as geographers and historians? So well does he know where he is, that he cries out,

" Poetic fields encompass me around,
And still I seem to tread on classic ground."

Though

Though Addison touched on many things, as a poet, a virtuoso, a politician, and a man of the world, he left Italy worth being visited by other eyes and other pens to advantage; for its riches and rarities, he says, are found to be inexhaustible.

Notwithstanding what Laffels, Burnet, Addison, Blainville, Wright, Keyfler, Smollet, down to Lady Miller and Dr. Moore, (who made good use of his ears as well as his eyes) have communicated, Italy will continue to be surveyed; and, from the examples and descriptions given by Sir William Hamilton, Baron Risdale, Brydone, and Swinburne, Malta and Sicily may be included in the idea of the Grand Tour.

It was a whisper, and came afterwards to the loudness of a report, that Lord Warwick lost his tutor for some time at Venice, and that he was discovered coming out of the house of a courtesan. Luckily, it was not the place "*from whose bourn no traveller returns.*" The rigid Cato would have permitted a visit, but not a residence, in such mansions. Might not Addison's curiosity carry him thither, like the old Cenfor's into the theatre, only to come
out

out again? But when and where continence is esteemed a greater virtue than at Venice, Addison afforded a notable example of it. A married lady, of whom he was enamoured, whilst she continued single, gave him encouragement to renew his addresses, which might soon and easily have ended in an assignation. Addison had the integrity to resist the temptation, and wrote her a letter (which was printed about twenty years ago) politely repulsing the solicitation. History commends, highly and properly, the conduct of Scipio to his Spanish captive. But we may be more certain of the motive and merit of Addison, which was no less than the sacrifice of old love (*And O! how hard the science to forget!*) at the altar of Virtue (till some future Nævius shall dispute the fact and unauthenticate the letter) than we are of Scipio's difficulty in preferring passion to glory. The glare of that meteor misled the Romans from the most natural emotions and affections. However, where noble actions are performed, none but a Rochefoucault would attribute them to ignoble motives.

In 1704 he and his friends were out of place, till the incident of the battle of Blenheim

heim found an occupation for him. Lord Godolphin consulted Lord Halifax (who had written a good copy of verses on the battle of the Boyne) to recommend a poet to celebrate this victory. Halifax instantly thought of Addison, and took an opportunity of reproaching the Lord Treasurer for his neglect of men of letters.—Surely the keeping literary men out of employment cannot be laid to the charge of Lord North ; nor will it probably be an accusation against his successors, for Learning is the fashion. The board of trade, *dum Troja fuit*, had five men of so much reputation for brilliancy and literature, that they could have formed a constellation to adorn the *Georgian Planet*.

The Minister. accepted the recommendation ; and Mr. Boyle the Chancellor of the Exchequer was desired to notify this business to Addison. Since the visit paid by Lord Danby to Andrew Marvel, and by the set of Charles the second's court to Oldham when usher at Croydon, in the last century, instances have been very uncommon of a minister of state ascending the stair-case of a poet's lodgings. Swift's compelling Lord Oxford, to walk about with the Treasurer's

surer's staff in his hand, at his levee, to distinguish Parnelle, was to the honour of all three. Prior gratefully and politely terms the visit of Lord Oxford, even on the purpose of taking a dinner with him,

“Of honour a more glorious proof,
Tho' Dorset us'd to bless the roof.”

Addison immediately entered upon his poetical labour, which was finished to the satisfaction of his employer. The Campaign set the seal upon his poetical character, and was

“His general passport thro' the gates of fame.”

The applauded simile, or allusion to the angel of vengeance, cut out work for the painter and engraver. Every succeeding edition had the picturesque frontispiece. There cannot be a greater proof of the goodness of poetry, than its bearing to be personified by the hand of the Artist: *ut pictura poesis erit*.

The poem of the Campaign, says Voltaire, (which he probably read and understood) will last longer than the commemorating pillar in Woodstock park, and (perhaps) the excellent lapidary inscription written by Dr. Hare. He acknowledges the important consequences of that day, as does president Henault in his excellent

cellent Chronological History. If it is now considered as no better than a Gazette in rhyme, or even than an old Gazette, it has had it's day, and was once thought more highly of. Dr. Johnson has vindicated it from the accusation of some injurious criticism.

The nation believed the Independency of Europe was preserved by that victory. The poet had his share of praise with the Conqueror. Achilles is only known by the poetry of Homer. The march from the Rhine to the Danube was as memorable as the expedition of Xenophon. The battle of Blenheim was as important as any in modern story. Pharsalia and Philippi alone were attended with greater consequences. This decisive battle was fought on a Sunday, on the morning of which Marlborough took the sacrament, being determined to conquer or to die. He might have said in the words of the Dutch admiral Opdam, "Before night my head will be either covered with laurel or with cypress." This was *a proud day for England*, for the battle of Hocksted and the sea-fight off Malaga were at the same time. "Your Grace, says Tallard, who
" be-

“ became his prisoner, has conquered the
 “ best army in the world.—Your Excellency,
 “ replies Marlborough, must except the army
 “ that beat it.” The trophies were hung up in
 Westminster-hall.—Addison grows so warm
 in his description of his hero, that it is worth
 while to transcribe a few lines, to prove the
 power of the writer for heroic poetry :

“ ’Twas then great Marlbro’s mighty soul was
 prov’d,
 That, in the shock of charging hosts unmov’d,
 Amidst confusion, horror, and despair,
 Examin’d all the dreadful scenes of war;
 In peaceful thought the field of death survey’d,
 To fainting squadrons sent the timely aid,
 Inspir’d repuls’d battalions to engage,
 And taught the doubtful battle where to rage.”

Sure these animated lines are full of poetry
 and painting. Are they not historical, personal,
 and poetical ? This Campaign looks well on
 the walls of Blenheim-house ; “ and the wa-
 “ ter of the Danube runs for ever purple
 “ through the loom.” The tapestry is in
 high preservation, and it is easy to distinguish
 (contrary to what remains in our royal pa-
 laces) in the words of one of our senators,
 whether it is Arras or Arachne.

Addison

Addison converted half the Tories to a continental war, which was the subject of great debate in the first cabinet council of the Queen. European fields of battle have given way to American ones; and the Danube has made room for the Chesapeake, which will soon have its poets and historians. Marlborough deserved all the honours he received, and all the praises in the Campaign :

“And factions strove who should applaud him most.”

Addison did not want the excuse of our great minister Mr. Pitt, even for prolonging the war of the Allies against France, which he made in parliament after the affair of Closter-Severn, “I carried you not to the Continent, I found you there.” For he was by principle for a land war instead of one by sea, and for foreign alliances, which Sir William Temple had made the nation in love with. And, as things have turned out, would it not have been better if our statesmen had not forgotten the practice of contracting foreign alliances, and even of paying subsidies? For after the peace, Bolingbroke says, he engaged in a two-hours conversation with Addison, and their politicks differed *toto celo*
from

from each other. The Tories employed the talents of the Splendid-shilling Philips. But the blank verse of his Blenheim was routed by the rhymes of the Whig Campaign.—This pen takes the liberty of digression ; but shall not write a digression in praise of digression ; for that has been already performed.—It is remarkable that John Dennis (the living Zoilus) obtained a reward for writing on this fruitful subject from the Duke of Marlborough, who even gave him a purse of fifty guineas. Dennis may be said to have been in the pay and service of the Duke. An author, who did not live on the top of Parnassus, remarks in his common-place book the generosity of a gallant soldier to this purpose. “General Ligonier (one of the heroes at Blenheim, and who performed such service at Laval) gave me this day fifty pounds. It is his rule, whenever he sees me, to give me all the money he has in his pocket.” It is pleasing to record acts of generosity. It is not universally known, that John Dennis thought he had offended the King of France beyond forgiveness by the number of the pamphlets he wrote against him, and waited

on our Duke on the talk of peace, with the hope that his Grace would intercede, to prevent him from being yielded a sacrifice to the French. The Duke told him, " he believed " he had done France as much mischief as " he could boast of; but he should make no " terms even for himself." Dennis flattered or frightened himself, that his eloquence against Lewis had the same effect as the speeches of Demosthenes against Philip, and that the Orators were to be given up.

Lord Godolphin conferred on Addison, as a reward for this poetical service, the place of Commissioner of Appeals, in the room of Mr. Locke, appointed a Lord of Trade. The next year he attended Lord Halifax to Hanover; and the year after he was appointed Secretary to Sir Charles Hedges, and was continued in that office by his successor Lord Sunderland.

About this time (1707) he was importuned to compose an English opera, and he chose the story of Rosamond, and dedicated it to the Dutches of Marlborough.

The Italian opera was now in fame, and Addison hoped to find his way to notice by an English composition of the same kind.

The attempt miscarried perhaps by the nature of our language. The Italian vowels are more capable of musical expression than the English consonants, which spoil the sweetness of vocal melody. Tickell says, that the music, being the composition of an Englishman during the raging passion for Italian airs, was alone sufficient for it's not giving satisfaction. The Companion to the playhouse asserts, it was very ill set, and that the merit of the poet could not preserve it. Dr. Arne, *whom we all knew*, who had set *Corpus* so deliciously, reset this English Opera. Some of the songs were happily set. *Rosamond* contains poetry and character; and though it has not business enough for the stage, it will give pleasure in the closet, for which the Italian Operas, but with exception to *Metastasio's*, are totally unfit. Tickell publicly ingratiated himself into the favour of Addison by writing a very good copy of verses to him, on this opera. He was one of our best versifiers.

Addison wrote the prologue to Steele's *Tender Husband*, and was surprized next morning with a dedication of that comedy to him. Poets sometimes love to play into the hands of one another. Gold-

Smith dedicated one of his comedies to Dr. Johnson, whom he saw every day.

Addison wrote the prologue and Prior the epilogue to Smith's *Phædra* and *Hippolitus*, which came out in 1709, and interested himself in it's success: and yet the town hardly gave it a third night's hearing, through their partiality to the Italian opera, as he says in the *Spectator*. There is a traditionary story, that Addison was about to engage him to write the history of the Revolution. Oldisworth, his acquaintance and panegyrist, says, that he had read all the books of history, and had thoroughly digested Thuanus, so as to be able to imitate him; and that he was singled out to write a history, which it was their interest (the Whigs) to have done with the utmost art and dexterity. The design, he says, was dropped, and for reasons much to the honour of Smith. Tradition says, that Addison dismissed him, on his asking what he was to do with the character of Lord Sunderland, with an affronting question.

In 1709 Addison attended Lord Wharton to Ireland as his Secretary, with the place of Keeper of the Records, and an increased salary.

lary. How came the moral and religious Addison to be in the train of such a man as Wharton, especially as described by Swift, and acknowledged by Lord Shaftesbury? or how came Wharton to be the Queen's Viceroy in Ireland, who perhaps thought virtue only to be a name, and who would not have given a guinea to have purchased the best reputation? These are questions that may be answered.—Wharton forced himself upon Lord Godolphin, by shewing him a treasonable letter of his to the abdicated family, that he had got into his possession. The reign of Wharton was but short, and he came over to make a bad use of the letter. But Godolphin had been too cunning for him, and procured an act of grace in his absence, which enabled him to set Wharton at defiance. As to Addison's accepting an employment under this Verres, as delineated by Swift, it is not necessary to refuse benefits from a bad man, when the acceptance implies no approbation of his crimes; nor has a subordinate officer any obligation to examine the opinions or conduct of those under whom he acts, except that he may

not be made the instrument of wickedness. This is an observation of the last biographer, who finds good excuses for Addison. The acknowledgment of this debt is sufficient payment.

Steele set up the paper of the Tatler the 12th of April, 1709, whilst Addison was in Ireland, and Swift was in England, who threw in a witty essay now and then. Addison, by a criticism he once had communicated, found out that his friend Steele was the editor. By such marks did Erasmus discover Sir Thomas More. Steele received great help from Addison while he continued in Ireland, but so much more on his return, that he confesses he fared like a distressed potentate who implores assistance, and is undone by his auxiliary. The reader shall have an opinion of Dr. Felton, a contemporary and polite scholar, who thus wrote (On the Classics) in 1710 on these Lucubrations; (for as yet the Spectators were not): "I cannot pass by the grave and facetious 'Squire Bickerstaff, who hath drawn mankind in every dress and every disguise of nature, in a style ever varying with the humours, fancies,

cies, and follies he describes. He hath shewed himself a master in every turn of his pen, whether his subject be light or serious ; and hath laid down the rules of common life with so much judgment, in such agreeable, such lively, and elegant language, that from him your Lordship (Lord Roos) may form your manners and your style."

The ministry being changed, Addison enjoyed more learned leisure. It is supposed he now began to read over the works of Tillotson, towards the formation of an English dictionary ; for Dryden complained that our language was without one. Swift threw out the hint, in a letter to Lord Oxford ; Addison began to collect the words ; but Johnson, single handed, set about the task in earnest, and finished, *tantæ molis erat !* the durable fabric of the English language.

The paper of the Tatler was so well received, that it induced Addison to continue that species of writing, under the new signature of the Spectator. *Uno avulso non deficit alter aureus.* The Tatler indeed was in so high estimation, and was thought to be capable of doing so much service, in the

cause of virtue and good manners, that some gentlemen of reputation and courage publicly undertook to defend the person of Isaac Bickerstaff, and take upon themselves any danger that should threaten him. Steele returns his thanks for this to the generals Davenport and Bisset, and to Lord Forbes,

Dr. Warton conjectures that Addison's *Tables of Fame* suggested the *design* to Pope, the *machinery* he derives from Chaucer, of his Temple of Fame. The 81st number of the Tatler, dated in 1709, contains the beautiful vision on this subject. Ovid has also his demands on Pope. Whence Addison got this, or his vision of Mirza, and indeed his beautiful allegories, but from his own prolific imagination, may perhaps be as much unknown as the original story of Prodicus, which he translates from Xenophon into one of his essays. Under the title of the Choice of Hercules, this makes a fine poetical appearance at the end of Spence's Polymetis, by Dr. Lowth, who obtained very early a high feat on Parnassus, and who very lately refused the highest station in the Church.

The first number of the Spectator made its appearance in the beginning of March, 1711,
in

in which he gives a jocular account of who he is, or wishes to pass for. What he says, in Italics, on the authority of his school-master (under his feigned character) *that his parts were solid, and would wear well*, was undoubtedly true. This description of himself and of his plan was turned into immediate ridicule, by a rival essayist; as his subsequent criticism on Chevy Chase was by a Dr. Wagstaff. But neither of these hostile pens shortened the days of the Spectator. He died his own literary death, when he thought he had lived long enough; for he was as much master of his own existence, as the person mentioned by Dr. Cheyne, who had it in his power to die when he pleased, and who actually breathed his last, in a few hours after he had made the experiment, in the presence of that physician.

The characters of the Club were drawn by Steele, in the second number; and are well done. The scene of the club is the frontispiece to the ornamented edition of Tonson. Well designed are all the drawings for the Spectator, Guardian, and Tatler (to say nothing of Milton and Shakespeare)

speare) by Hayman, who caught the dramatic art of grouping conversation-figures from Gravelot. Neither the Banquet of Xenophon, nor the Club of Ben Jonson, nor any of literary or convivial merit, have been so useful as the Spectator. These papers contained as little of party as a party-man could-help. The principal and most prominent character is Sir Roger de Coverley, understood to be drawn for Sir John Pakington of Worcestershire, a Tory, not without good sense, but abounding in absurdities. It appears from Swift's Journal to Stella, that he gave the hints of several of the speculations to Addison, with whom he always lived upon the best terms. They were published every morning, and had all the readers that were then to be had: but it was not so reading an age as the present. Posterity, says Dr. Kippis, must have a high idea of the manners and good sense of the British nation, when they are informed (upon the authority of Tickell) that twenty thousand of these papers were sometimes sold in a day. Wit and humour were not cramped by stamp nor paper duties. At the publisher's

com-

computation of twenty to a number, it had four hundred thousand readers. Sir Roger makes a figure in seven of the volumes. Addison alone knew how to conduct his hero properly. At least, Steele so much offended him, by putting him into a ridiculous situation under the Temple-cloysters, that he would not suffer him to have any thing more to do with him, but rescued him from his pen. Addison thought it safest and best to give an account of the death of the old knight himself, lest, as he said, he should be murdered by base hands. We wish he had given us some more of his adventures first. A comedy, with the title of Sir Roger de Coverley, written by Mr. Miller, though a Reverend, is amongst the forgotten things. Long before the conclusion of the Spectator, several of the greatest wits contributed their mite, in order to give or to get consequence. Steele, Hughes, Pearce, Budgell, Byrom, Grove, and Mr. Yorke (under the signature of Phil. Homebred) who became Earl Hardwicke, and, after having been Lord Chancellor for twenty years, wrote a short and elegant copy

copy of verses to Lady Egremont, were not ashamed to retail virtue and morality in these essays.—Cato's Letters, the Craftsman, the North Briton, and Junius, though seasoned with Cayenne and even with Attic salt, had not a greater periodical sale, and are not to be found in so many book rooms as those moral papers. Addison says in character, that he shall be ambitious to have it said of him, that he brought philosophy (which Socrates brought down from heaven) out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and at coffee-houses. Messrs. Mason and Burgh consider Mr. Addison as one of the champions of true taste in gardening, and the Spectator as affording the first rules for practice. See the new edition of the English Garden, with notes and a commentary. The papers on the Pleasures of the Imagination which, Lord Monboddo says, is *only imperfect sensation*, shew his insight into the beauties of art and nature, as well as of life and manners. N^o 414 certainly gave the first hint for the ornamented farm of Southcote, which has had so many imitations. The name of *ferme ornée*, says Mason, is all that has been taken

taken from the French. Pope's ridicule of clipped Evergreens, in the Guardian, destroyed that absurd taste. Of the particular authors of these diurnal compositions we cannot ascertain the names. The Bishop of Dromore, whilst only Dr. Percy, was expected to point them out; and the task (this Essayist is this moment informed) is now delegated to a proper editor. Whoever has books, as Chesterfield says of Swift, has the Spectator. It was thought the magic of the title would make a ninth volume popular. It was undertaken by one Bond, but did not succeed. The entertaining Essays of the Mirror may stand their ground: but it is doubtful whether they would bear a continuation by other pens, or even the old ones. The World, the Rambler, Connoisseur, Adventurer, and the Idler, must not be meddled with by a Procrustes, to make them more or less.

It is in recollection, that a Mr. Bayne, in a letter from Scotland, writes of a story recorded in the Spectator, with the signature of Amanda, which he attributes to Hughes, that "when that letter came out in the Spectator (to give the reader an idea of the effect

effect of its having a place there) as the paper was generally read at breakfast, it mixed tears with a great deal of the tea that was that morning drunk in London and Westminster." — "The Spectator, says Voltaire to Mr. Sharp, puts your Platos out of countenance: and the morals of Plutarch are fit only for the grocer's shop or the trunk-maker."

The Guardian had the same distinguishing marks of Addison's assistance. But the writers seem to be more reserved and serious than in the Spectator. The vein of humour might not be so rich as it had been (perhaps a little exhausted, like the silver mines of Potosi), and their respect for the public made them unwilling to lose the praise they had got, or unwilling to entice the reader to laugh. Besides, a Guardian is a more serious personage than a Spectator, a Tatler, or a Lover.

When the Guardian was laid down by Steele, to wield a political pen, Mr. Hughes offered to serve under Mr. Addison in a new periodical paper, to be published three times a week, and to be called the *Register*: a title which was more approved of than *The Humanity*

manity Club. Addison very civilly refuses it, in a letter from Bilton near Rugby, Warwickshire, pleading the necessity of taking breath, after having been almost exhausted; but recommending Hughes to undertake it singly, which he declines.

Addison adhered to the Whigs through principle, as well as through interest. In 1707 he published a pamphlet, to urge the prosecution of the war; and by land, in preference to that by sea. Three years afterward he wrote five numbers of the *Whig Examiner*, which was continued by other able men, under the name of the *Medley*, in order to make reprisals on the *Tory Examiner*; which, he says, ought to have been called the *Executioner*. His papers are written with great spirit and power. He ridicules and confutes Bolingbroke's letter to the *Examiner*, defends a poem of Garth against Prior, and makes an excellent party speech for general Stanhope, in the name of Alcibiades to the Athenians, to lampoon Sir John Cross, the Tory brewer in Westminster, who got the election against the Whigs.—Whilst he was upon his travels he
com-

composed a dramatic poem, on the story of Cato: on his return he converted it into a tragedy, of which he displayed four finished acts to his friends. Hughes wrote, or undertook to write, the fifth act, which, however, Addison did not accept; for Hughes told him, that something ought to be done for *Liberty* at that crisis. Addison set about his own fifth act, which was finished in less than three weeks; for which he is said to have been beholden to May's Supplement of Lucan.

Hughes urged it to be brought upon the stage. Pope advised that it should be published, and not acted. But Addison told him it was promised to take its chance on the stage. Pope wrote the prologue, and Garth the epilogue. Swift was at the rehearsal of Cato; and writes, "there were not above half a dozen of us to see it. We stood on the stage; and it was foolish enough to see the actors prompted every moment, and the poet directing them; and the drab (Mrs. Oldfield) that acts Cato's daughter, out in the midst of a passionate part; and then calling out, What's next? I dined privately with

with Mr. Addison." Steele procured friends to support it, as he promised, or, in other words, *he packed an audience*, on its first appearance. He values himself on having proved so good an aid de camp to Addison, by bringing so just an audience, on the first days, as to make it impossible for the vulgar to put it's success or due applause to any hazard. This is the language of a friend and a partizan. The Tories divided the applause, and thought to turn the tables upon the Whigs; for Bolingbroke gave Booth a purse of fifty guineas from the stage-box, which, Cibber says, were collected in the boxes while the play was acting, with this compliment—"for his honest opposition to a perpetual dictator, meaning the Duke of Marlborough, and his dying so bravely in the cause of liberty." Pope, in a letter to Sir William Trumbull, dated April 30th, 1713, writes him word, that "the violent claps of the whig party, on the one side of the theatre, were echoed back by the Tories on the other, while the author sweated behind the scenes with concern, to find their applause proceeding more from the hand than the head."

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Dogget,

Dogget, the great Comedian, says Cibber, was a staunch Whig, and proposed that his brother managers should make the same present to Booth, which was immediately agreed to. The commentaries of Colley Cibber, which are consulted on this occasion, inform us, that the author of *Cato* and the actors had their different hopes of fame and profits amply answered by the performance; that he had the pleasure of reading the first four acts privately with Steele, nine years before it was acted, who damped his satisfaction by telling him, that, notwithstanding the spirit Addison had shewn in writing it, he doubted, whether he would ever have the courage to let his *Cato* stand the censure of an English audience. Our theatrical historiographer goes on and tells us, that Addison had made the managers a present of whatever profits he might have claimed from his tragedy, and therefore they thought themselves obliged to spare no cost in the proper decorations of it. The unexpected after-crop of *Cato*, as Cibber calls it, made the three managers gainers of thirteen hundred and fifty pounds apiece at the close of the season.

son. Cato made Booth, as much as Windsor Castle made Wickham. This tragedy was performed at Oxford in the intervening summer, and to full houses. It was imagined, and justly, that Cato being a flower raised in that learned garden, where Addison had his education, must have a local relation to him, and attract an audience of brethren more benevolent to his fame, than any other place. The profit and success was very great to Cibber and his partners. Besides allowing fifty pounds to the repair of St. Mary's Church, each manager, for his twenty-one days labour, received, clear of all charges, one hundred and fifty pounds more. The whole profits from the winter and summer's exhibition amounted to a division of fifteen hundred pounds: the greatest sum ever known to have been shared in one year, at that time. The Beggar's Opera, Pantomimes, and the Stratford Jubilee, put such receipts out of countenance.

The triumvirate left Oxford, with the thanks of the Vice-Chancellor, for the decency and good behaviour of the whole play-house company. The same crowds, says Cibber, continued for three days together,

an uncommon curiosity in that place : and the death of Cato triumphed over the injuries of Cæsar every where.

Addison, in compliment to his party, (a slave to party, child, and man the same, as Pope would here malignantly have said of him) refused to dedicate Cato to the Queen, though she had expressed her inclination for that purpose. The soliloquy is finely turned into Latin by Dr. Bland, in the *Spectator*. Eustace Budgell made an unhappy use of the suicide in the play : expecting the consequences of a prosecution on account of forging the will of Dr. Tindal, he drowned himself in the Thames, and is said to have left this line in his bureau,

“ What Cato did, and Addison approved,
Cannot be wrong.”

Which, however reported, is probably not true, for Addison makes Cato in his last words disapprove his own death.

The applause or censure of the town is too loud for printed criticism. Dennis wrote ably against this tragedy, and Pope and Sewell for it. Addison was displeased with Pope's pamphlet against Dennis, in its favour. In all theatres and booths where plays are acted, or can be got up, is Cato represented. It ran
for

for thirty-five nights uninterruptedly; and became as great a favourite as Cato was in ancient Rome. It is adjudged fitter for the closet than the stage, and a better poem than a play. When I am hearing the soliloquy (says Guthrie, in an excellent discourse on tragedy, where he is comparing it with Hamlet's) I am thinking more of Addison than of Cato. The best judges, says the new Biographia, declared in it's favour, when they read it, with the same passion the pit had done when it was first seen.

On the death of the Queen, Addison was appointed Secretary to the Lords of the Regency. From the information of the late Mr. Hume it is inserted here, that the republican Fletcher of Salton was in London, whilst *they* were sitting at the Cockpit, and observed upon the occasion, that "he never saw the throne of Great Britain so well filled." Bolingbroke waited at the door with his secretary's papers, and received orders who had been used to give them. It was in Addison's power to have been Secretary of State at the Accession; but he chose to wave it for the present. It was at this Council-board an observation was made, that his appointment did not answer the expectation of his friends. He

had to notify the death of the Queen to the Court of Hanover; but was so nice or so tedious, that a clerk was employed to write it. Official business in general is better performed by second than first-rate men. An ivory knife will cut paper, says Swift, more truly and evenly than a sharp razor. Lord Arlington had been disappointed or deceived in some matter he trusted to Sir William Temple. "I am rightly served," says the statesman, "for employing a man of learning on such a business. I will take care in future how I depend upon a scholar." Budgell informs us, that he attended Lord Halifax and Addison in a barge to Greenwich, to meet the new King from Hanover. Halifax said, he expected to have the Treasurer's staff, and to have great influence, and would endeavour to avoid some of the errors of late reigns, and make his master a great King; and recommend Addison to be a Secretary of State. The poet blushed, and thanked him for such honourable friendship; but declared that his merits and ambition did not carry him to so high a place. Halifax was disappointed when the king came over: Mr. Walpole had
more

more influence, or succeeded by intrigue; which is supposed to have mortified Lord Halifax so highly that he fell into a pulmonary fever, and died soon after this unsuccessful struggle for power.

A rebellion breaking out in 1715, Addison drew his pen in the service of Government, in a periodical paper, called the Freeholder. It is a political Spectator, and is composed with so much good temper, good humour, and touches upon so many points of lasting importance, that it is not forgot with the politics of the time. He makes the other party very ridiculous, and the reader laugh at the expence of the vanquished Tories. Nothing but truth can bear the test of ridicule, and hardly that. There seems to be but one essay that calls for exemplary punishment; and that is, in answer to an ill-intended pamphlet. Steele told old Cibber, that the ministry employed a lute when they wanted a trumpet. That trumpet was Steele, in the second volume of the Englishman. Addison wrote verses, and fine ones, after the accession; to Sir Godfrey Kneller, on the King's picture, and to the princess of Wales, with the tra-

gedy of Cato. On the appointment of the Earl of Sunderland to be Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Addison went over a second time into that Kingdom, as his Secretary. A hint was given him by Lord Sunderland that he should not visit the Dean of St. Patrick's, who had been mischievous to the Whigs; and, as appears from his own letters, had, since the accession, offered his pen to Lord Bolingbroke. Addison spoke out plainly, and gave his patron to understand, that he would not be dictated to, and would rather lose his place than give up his intimacy with Dr. Swift. It is most likely this came to the knowledge of the Dean. They conversed and corresponded to the end of Addison's life, and it may be supposed, from their latest letters, their friendship was above politics. Addison had early influence with Swift; he made him alter his *Baucis and Philemon*: Swift submitted, and to whom beside did he make submission? blotted out fourscore lines, added fourscore, and altered fourscore.— A letter of Addison's, preserved in one of the three last volumes of Swift by Mr. Nichols, dated from Dublin, June 3, 1710, (during his

his first visit to Ireland) is written with great happiness of expression and warmth of friendship, and with an admiration, which he constantly preserved for this great wit. The head and heart that could compose such a letter would hardly suffer a correspondence and familiarity to be put a stop to. Such was their affection and esteem for each other, in spite of the spirit of party, that I have heard Swift declare, says Dr. Delany, that, often as they spent their evenings together, they neither of them ever wished for a third person, to support or enliven their conversation. "One morning, from the information of Swift," continues our anecdote writer, and this gossiping transcriber, "the conversation happened to turn upon the most distinguished characters in the history of the Old Testament, in which Swift preferred and supported that of *Joseph*, and Addison that of *Jonathan*. After they had urged their reasons, on both sides, with a good deal of zeal, Mr. Addison smiled, and said, he was glad no third person was witness to their dispute: recollecting at once, that he was asserting the hero of Swift's name, and Swift the hero of his; which might

might be interpreted by a third person, as an intended compliment of each, to the other. Whereas, in truth, nothing was more undesigned, or remote from their thoughts."

Sunderland did not remain long in Ireland: he returned to be prime minister. Addison came back with his patron. He mustered up courage, while in Ireland, to ask a certain valuable favour for a Major Dunbar, of his Lordship, and succeeded for him. Dunbar thought his kindness worth a return of a bank note of 300 l. value. Addison would not touch it, and sent it back. Gratitude offered the value in the shape of a diamond ring, which was also rejected, Addison assuring him, in a letter (which is in print) that the obliging a man of so much merit was a sufficient gratification; as it is to every one "who knows the luxury of doing good;" as Goldsmith says of and to his brother.

Addison, on his return to England, was made a Lord of Trade; which post he held till he was made a Secretary of State.

Among some resolutions Swift wrote down, to be taken by himself was this, *not to go courting after I am forty*. Himself was
courted

courted after fifty. Addison took great pains to woo, and to win, a widow, the relict of Lord Warwick, when he was forty-five. If he had competitors, his wit perhaps won him the race with this Atalanta. Rowe is supposed to have written his *Colin's Complaint* on a real or imaginary rivalry for the Countess; and to pay a compliment to Addison, for whom he poetically pleads with that Lady in another poem.

“Thy false one inclines to a swain,
Whose music is sweeter than thine.”

This pastoral produces effects known to all who are familiar with love, especially the disappointment of a first love. It is tenderness itself; or, in the words of Sir Henry Wotton to Milton, on his *Comus*, *ipsa mollities*. And yet the author of *Jane Shore* (now so admirably personated on the stage by Mrs. Yates and Mrs. Siddons), is marked by Addison to Pope, though not as a man absolutely void of benevolent notions, to be without a heart. This ballad, just applied, which shews all the poetry of passion, is finely translated by Bourne into Latin verse. It was a long time before Lady Warwick could obtain her own consent, to give her hand to the tutor of her son. Besides, a part of her fortune was to go
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from her on that event. She had the pride of half her nation in her : but had she been mistress of the whole principality of Wales she would not have made Addison prince of it. Oldmixon, who in this may be believed, says in his history, that he left his fortune to his daughter and to Lady Warwick, (as his last will proclaims) which he tells us was about twelve thousand pounds; and that the letters and poems he addressed to her during his courtship (which Addison says *is the pleasantest part of life*) some of which possibly may be handed about, would find many readers, if they were published. No doubt his addresses were as warm and as poetical as Waller's to Saccharissa. Happy might it have been for him, if, like Apollo and Waller, when he grasped the nymph, he had "fill'd his arms with bays."

He was married to her in August, 1716. Tradition reports they were seldom in each other's company. His taste was to be abroad; for his home was not comfortable to him. Socrates and Xantippe did not live upon worse terms. Pride, not jealousy, was the fury that reigned in her breast. Bacchus perhaps had more charms for Addison than Venus. He resembled in two circumstances his contemporary

temporary and countryman Aubrey (a gentleman much addicted to alchemy, judicial astrology, and superstition) who says of himself in his diary, "that he was born weakly, not likely to live, and christened immediately after his birth," and, which produces a second resemblance, he writes, "I made my first address, in an *ill hour*, to Joan Sommer." Was not Addison born under as unlucky a planet as John Aubrey? and must we not suppose, in the language of Prior, "the stars were more in fault than they?" Wits and scholars are not celebrated for domestic happiness (though Rowe was happy in his choice) nor even for making the best of husbands; and philosophers, says Eloisa, have no business for wives. Addison certainly did not find the temple of Hymen contiguous to that of happiness, as Honour was to the temple of Virtue. In vain was he complimented by the sons of Apollo on this occasion, with hymeneal poetry. The path seemed to be thinly strewed with roses, and with myrtle. The complacency he did not enjoy at home, which was the entertaining at *his* table (or *her* table, as she might term it) men of wit and literature, he sought for in public business, and took the refuge of the

Coffee-

Coffee-house or the Tavern with select friends. Dr. Young has been heard to relate, that he often used to walk from Holland-house, to a Coffee house in Kensington, to enjoy his favourite dish of a fillet of veal, his bottle, and perhaps his friend. There is a story not yet forgotten, that the Duke of Wharton, the profligate, and perhaps only reputed or imputed son of his patron the old marquis, plied him one day at the table so briskly with wine, in order to make him *talk*, that he could not keep it on his stomach; which made his grace observe, that “he could get wine, but “not wit out of him.”

“I received the news, says Lady Mary Montague, in a letter to Pope, from the East, of Addison’s being declared Secretary of State, with the less surprize, in that I knew that post was almost offered to him before. At that time he declined it; and I really believe he would have done well to have declined it now. Such a post as that, and such a wife as the Countess, do not seem to be in prudence eligible for a man that is asthmatic; and we may see the day when he will be heartily glad to resign them both.” Thus writes that consummate judge of both sexes!

Addi-

Addison's daughter by Lady Warwick is still alive, and unmarried. She lives at Bilton near Rugby, and is almost old enough to be superannuated. Mr. Symonds (the Cambridge professor of modern history) saw her two summers ago; and says, she enjoys an income of more than £1200 a year. Indeed, by all accounts, she was not a Minerva from the brain of Jupiter:

“ But careless now of fortune, fame, or fate,
Perhaps forgets that *Addison* was great.”

Addison sat in the two last parliaments of the Queen. The Journals of the House of Commons record, that on a petition, in 1708, against his election for Lestwithiel, he was found not duly elected. By the interest of Lord Wharton he was chosen member for Malmesbury at the general election. The time is perhaps coming, when burgage tenure, which Burnet calls the rotten part of the constitution, may be corrected, and when members of parliament may not be *adscripti glebæ*. “ So popular was Addison become, says Swift to Stella, that if he had stood for the Kingship, he would have been chosen.”

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In his Freeholder he is a champion for the septennial bill, which was carried for the preservation of the House of Hanover, and which continues for the duration of ministers. How much landed estate he had does not appear. Somerville writes some verses to him on his purchase in Warwickshire. The qualification act had passed, which, according to Burnet, set up property against reputation. Steele, who was never burdened with wealth in dirty acres, was in parliament in the Queen's time for Stockbridge, and after the Accession, for Boroughbridge. Steele's manner of gratifying his electors for Stockbridge was by winning their wives over to his interest. It may possibly put the historical reader in mind of Darius Hyftaspes succeeding to the throne of Persia by the neighing of his horse. For Steele undertook to be godfather, or to give a sum of money, to all the children that should be born in a twelvemonth after his election. In this, or in some such way, he ventured his purse and his wit.

Addison sat by the side of Steele on the day of his expulsion, and prompted him very ably. But the book of numbers was called for, and nei-

neither his cause nor his wit could save him from expulsion. Bishop Newton tells us, "that Mr. Walpole and Pulteney were dispatched by the Kit Kat Club, with positive orders, that Steele should not make his own speech, but that Addison should make it for him, and that he should recite it from the other's writing without any insertion or addition of his own. Addison thought it a hard injunction, and said he must be like a schoolboy, and desire the gentlemen to give him a little sense." In a case already determined (to use a phrase of Atterbury, on his approaching bill of pains and penalties) a speech of Addison's could not have preserved him from his enemies: "Not words alone pleased them." On the merit of his sufferings for his party, Steele obtained a recompence at the Accession. But money seemed to have an odd effect on our distressed and newly-created knight; for every additional sum seems to have raised new wants, and to have thrown him into greater difficulties.

A seat in the House of Commons is no new turnpike road to importance in the State. But Addison made as little advantage of it as

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any

any man that ever sat on the treasury-bench. He neither meant to corrupt nor be corrupted. Perhaps he thought, till experience convinced him to the contrary, he could make a public speaker, or be able to produce a *single speech* at least. He certainly once got up to speak: on what occasion is not now known. The expectation of the house was so great, and the cries of "hear him, hear him," so thundered in his ears, that he was intimidated, and sat down. The memory of Lord Shaftesbury, when a commoner, deserted him, whilst speaking on the bill for allowing counsel in cases of high treason; but he recovered himself, and converted his want of presence of mind in that place into an argument for the bill, which passed that session into a law. The first Duke of Ormond, when Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in the course of his speech to that parliament, was lost, whether recoverably or otherwise, the writer does not recollect; but the accident perhaps is mentioned in Carte's History of that Duke. Our great Tillotson thought he could preach a sermon extempore; but was soon obliged to descend from the pulpit, which

which was mounted immediately by Bishop Burnet, who had none of those defects in his composition. Lord Halifax used to tell Addison, "that it was a pity and a shame he should suffer a silly fellow in the house to get up and prate for an hour together and not make him an answer." To face an audience for the first time is awful to confidence itself. "*This is terrible indeed!*" were the words of sensibility in the extreme, uttered upon the scaffold, on Tower Hill, in forty-six, in the sight of innumerable spectators. As the ministry found Addison was no orator, they excused him. Could he have been transferred from the club to the senate, under the elevation of wine, he might have talked, as was said by the court flatterers to James the first, like a man inspired. His bashfulness was overcome at the table with his friends: "Then," to use the rant of Statira, "he would talk, good gods, how he would talk!"

In April, 1717, by the influence of Lord Sunderland, he was appointed Secretary of State. That nomination was thought to be for the honour of the nation: "By merit

raised to that high eminence." Though he was by no means capable of managing the House of Commons, or taking the lead in public affairs, he was perfectly convinced they were in safe hands, and that we had a good king and good ministers. He wrote in defence of the peerage bill, which, as it raised an alarm, and because some unpopular acts had passed since the Accession, the ministry was obliged to give up. Steele, in a paper called the Plebeian, was the antagonist of the Patrician. It is supposed this bill was brought forward to serve as a check upon the heir apparent, who was not upon the best terms with his father. Mr. Walpole is said to have had the honour to make up the royal differences some time after.

Addison was sinking into a bad habit of body. His constitution was certainly but an indifferent one. But his great care was *how* to live. There are many who are strangers to a day of complete health; and to whom, as well as Addison and Pope, *life is a continual disease*. Tacitus Gordon, at that time an adventurer from Scotland, and a great admirer of Addison, used to relate, that "he
killed

killed himself with drinking *the widow Trueby's water*; (see the Spectator.) He soon found himself unfit for the drudgery of a political life, and to be a pack-horse of state. Possibly his parts might be originally too fine, as Clarendon says of Lord Southampton, for such coarse work.

He, who for so many years frequented the levees of others, now, by his rank in the state, was intitled to have one of his own. He had poets to wait upon him, who, as a poet, had given so many attendances. Ambrose Philips complained, "he had done nothing for him." He became a sort of patron to classical men. Maittaire and Trapp dedicated to him. He gave a purse of guineas to Milton's daughter, whom he knew at first sight from her father's picture. He intended to have presented her to Queen Caroline—the Queen of the Whigs. Pope, in a letter to Craggs, complains that Addison wanted to keep him down. But, "after all," says he, "I have not quarrelled with this great man." He expressed his resentment, soon after, in the most poignant poetical portrait, which he sent to Addison, and is printed under the name of Atticus. He describes him as a man who was afraid of him. Learn-

ing, like love, begets jealousy. Addison could not wish to enter the lists with Pope,

“Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike.”

Nor, as we hope, be so ungenerous, as to

“Blame for arts which caus'd himself to rise.”

Feeling himself now quite incapable of going through the fatigues of his office, and fearing least the public service should suffer by his lying by, he resigned the seals, and retired from town, to attend to the recovery of his health. The King granted him a pension of 1700*l.* a year. His friends began to have some hopes of his lasting a good while longer, and of his having it in his power to pursue his literary amusements. For he writes to Swift, “that he is better, having got rid of his place and his asthma.” But after his enduring a great deal of pain, a return of his disorder, attended with a dropsy, put a period to his valuable life, at Holland-house, on June 17, 1719, in the forty-eighth year of his age. Perceiving the rapid approach of his dissolution, he sent for Lord Warwick; and was with difficulty supported by cordials till he came; who wished to know his commands. “I have sent for you, says Addison, that you may be a witness how a Christian can die.” This memorable death,

death, surely as affecting and as exemplary as that of Socrates (whose story he was about to weave into a tragedy) is pathetically alluded to by Tickell, in his undying verses, which Steele illnaturally calls, prose in rhyme.

“ He taught us how to live; and oh! too high
The price for knowledge, taught us how to die.”

Dr. Young, in his Essay on Original Composition, has taken care that the behaviour of this great and good man, in his last-moments, shall not be overlooked. The widow of the Bishop of Cloyne has reported in conversation, as her husband told her, that Addison often observed, he had been in danger of losing his religion, by attaching himself to the Whigs. Whatever concession Addison might make to Dean Berkley, who was a Tory, he could remain, with low-churchmen, like Socrates in Athens, however infected it might be with the plague.

Thus comments, immediately after the event, Mr. Hughes, *quo non præstantior alter*, in a letter to Earl Cowper, “ I condole with your Lordship on the loss of that fine genius, Mr. Addison. I shall often now think on that topic, from which Lucretius draws a very elegant reproof to a common undistinguished person, who bewails himself on the

shortness of life, and the certain prospect of death." Achilles has done the same in Homer.

"Ancus, thy better far, was born to die,
And thou, dost thou bewail mortality?
The founders of invented arts are lost,
And wits who made eternity their boast:
And thou, dost thou disdain to yield thy breath
Whose very life is little more than death?"

DRYDEN,

This moralizing writer (in the words of Addison, when amongst the tombs of Westminster-abbey) considers the vanity of grieving for those, whom we must quickly follow. He feels a vacancy from the sudden loss of the conversation and friendship of the Earl of Suffolk, and laments his departure, though death may be ready to surprize him, by knocking at his own door. Hughes followed Addison a few months afterwards: *ut unda supervenit undam*. They both lived well, and are in the catalogue of poets, to whom, as Johnson says of West, "the grave needed not be terrible." Addison was buried by torch light in the Cloysters of West-

Westminster-abbey, where, as he says, there are poets without monuments (his own case) and monuments which have no poets; the whole choir attending the service. Craggs, his successor, did not stay long behind him; and was buried in the same grave. Like Saul and Jonathan, they were lovely in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided. Excuse, Reader, the solemnity of the quotation and application. If he had lived longer, it is probable he would have gone on with his discourse upon the Christian Religion. It is said he intended a translation of the Psalms, of which he has given some beautiful specimens in the Spectator. Surely his imitations possess as much of the spirit of the Royal Poet, as those of Buchanan or Johnston, and are more *vocal* and valuable to the English reader. The divine ode in the 489th Spectator, on his return from his travels, is pious and poetical in the highest degree. The escape from shipwreck, in the Italian seas (when, as he relates, the captain confessed himself to a Capuchin on board) might warm him into that devotional rhapsody. The whole

whole is admirable : accept a stanza—*ex uno
(disce omnes.)*

“ Confusion dwelt in every face,
And fear, in every heart ;
When waves on waves, and gulphs on gulphs,
O’ercame the pilot’s art.”

Steele asserts, that “ whatever Steele owed to Addison, the world owed Addison to Steele.” He thus vindicates himself, and lays posterity (*suum cuique rependet posteritas*) under an obligation for being the gentleman-usher to Addison. They were both men of good principles in Church and State. Steele, more careless of consequences, was more intemperate in his politics. They had no differences in party ; but only on the degree of it. The political thermometer (see that paper in the Tatler) of Addison did not mount so high as his coadjutor’s. Steele, by attaching himself to Mr. Walpole, and Addison to Sunderland, engaged one another in a paper duel, in the dark, when they took up their pens on the subject of the peerage-bill. When Addison found out his friend Dicky, he treated him with a little severity. Steele suffered

suffered Addison to make free with him on all occasions. Sheridan submitted in the same manner to Dr. Swift. But it produced no quarrels. Steele had his lass, and Addison his glass, without mutual reproach.

If you have a mind to quarrel with your friend, says old Observation, "accommodate him with a sum of money." Addison lent Steele an hundred pounds, and sued him for payment. The common interpretation on this behaviour is to the disadvantage of Addison. There is in every story some circumstance that is overlooked, and not brought to account.

Possibly Addison took that step to serve Steele, or to save him from a greater shame. But is the fact true? whence does the story originate? Every body cannot burn promissory notes, as the banker did those of Charles V. at the entertainment they gave him at Brussels.

The generosity of David Garrick to the late Mr. Berenger, who had fallen into distress by wit or by negligence, was as memorable and as meritorious. He sent him back his securities for £500, with a donation

tion of a bank note of £ 300. Surely this was the behaviour of Anthonio, and not of Shylock. It ought not—it shall not be forgotten. In his own wish and words on Shakespeare,

“And light may the turf be, that pillows his head!”

Probably Steele forgave or forgot any unkindness in the transaction alluded to; for after Addison's death he promises Congreve to assume the pen, to display the originality of Addison's genius. Sir Richard (for at the Accession he was knighted, and, if we are not mistaken, with the sword of the Duke of Marlborough, as well as Dr. Garth) relates, that Addison was able to dictate with rapidity to his amanuensis, whilst he walked about the room, and attend to the coherence and the grammar. He must have had a strong head, and great collectedness for this purpose, and have perfected this uncommon qualification into a habit. Steele mentions this whilst he is on the subject of the Haunted House: in which Comedy, almost demonstratively the performance of Addison, nobody enters on the stage, or quits it, as is remarked

marked of Terence, without a reason. Lord Bacon, as described by Dr. Rawleigh, his Secretary, was able to dictate for whole hours, without the least intermission. Necessity, as much as inclination, compels to this practice. The voluminous and entertaining Dr. Campbell (whose conversation in Queens-square will be long remembered by his friends) composed with the pen of an amanuensis. He dictated his Political Survey of Britain, which his trembling hand could not have written without fatigue. Not to mention the well-known talents of Julius Cæsar, the reader may be truly told, that Sir William Jones, now on his voyage to his Judgeship at Calcutta, was able to dictate in more languages than one, at the same time, in verse as well as in prose. The capacity of Philidor to play at three tables, at Chess, blindfold, was an uncommon and astonishing effort of the human mind.

The poetical author of the *Enthusiast*, preserved in Doddsley's miscellanies, now ripened into an accomplished critic, asks, "what are the lays of artful Addison, coldly correct, to" ~~the~~ Addison had not perhaps by nature
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“the poet’s eye, in a fine phrensy rolling,” as we boast of Shakespeare, “with thoughts that melt, and words that burn:” but he was not always lifeless. If there was any foundation for Tickell’s assertion, that his pulse was not regular, it would account for the ebb and flow of wit, which that circumstance must produce in most men, and might on him. His muse perhaps resembled too much the temper of *his* Duke of Marlborough, “inflam’d by reason, and by reason cool’d.” Gilbert Cooper, who thinks meanly of him as a poet and critic, seems not to be wide from a true determination, when he pronounces “his translations to read like originals, and his originals like translations.” His judgement then seems to be greater than his fancy. Certainly, as Lord Roscommon asserts, in translation “the fancy labours less, the judgement more.” Dr. Felton says, he does not know which to prefer, the Latin or the English poems of Addison. His Latin poems have been often turned into English verse. Dr. Beattie’s English version and enlargement of the Pygmies and Cranes would have pleased Addison himself. The world is almost

almost tired with Latin poetry, especially since his time. The *Mousetrap* of Holdsworth, and the *Immortality of the Soul*, of Hawkins Browne, are not often enough equalled, to make modern Latin poetry called for. Mr. Melmoth is against writing or reading poetry in the circumscription of Latin expressions. He says, that the style of these performances always puts him in mind of Harlequin's snuff, which he collected, by borrowing a pinch out of every man's box he could meet, and then retailing it to his customers, under the pompous title of *Tabac de mille fleurs*."

The new appearance of Fresnoy's Latin poem on Painting, translated by Mr. Mason, and with notes by Sir Joshua Reynolds, must afford a present entertainment to the scholar, and be a source of more general amusement to the mere English Reader. The public must be curious to examine whether the casket contains a jewel, or not.

The Tory pen of Mrs. Manley, in the *Atalantis*, whom Addison calls the Female Tatler, did not injure his reputation so much whilst he was alive, where he is described as walking in the gallery of Sergius (Lord Halifax)

Halifax) as Pope's delineation of him under the name of Atticus has done, even down to our own times. In the words of Campbell, the satire "is bright and piercing as lightning, and as fatally blasting." The story of the translation of the first book of Homer, and of employing Gildon to write the libel on Pope, has been looked into. The inquiring Warton informs us, that he was assured by Dr. Young, Lord Bathurst, Walter Harte, and Lord Lyttelton, that Addison certainly translated the first book of the Iliad, which he patronised as Tickell's; yet, that he had lately *heard*, some proofs to the contrary have been discovered. The belief of Pope on these two points, from tell-tale and hear-say, reflects some discredit on himself. No one is permitted to decide in his own case, and poets are not the best judges of evidence. Under the article of Addison, in the new Biographia, is a large investigation of these charges against Addison, and a vindication of him by Judge Blackstone. As an author, no man is more panegyric on Addison than Pope. In his verses to him on his Dialogues on Medals he points to "A Virgil there,

there, and here an Addison !” In one of his happiest imitations of Horace he writes,

“ And, in our days (excuse some courtly stains)
No whiter page than Addison remains :
He from the taste obscene reclaims our youth,
And sets the passions on the side of truth.”

Addison is not sparing of his praises on Pope. He determined him on his translation of Homer, as Pope confesses, recommended it to the world, and probably obtained him subscribers. But the sword of Warburton has assaulted Addison, though not with wounds that never close, beyond any of his contemporaries. He perpetually represents him as a poor poet, and a superficial critic : and was seconded by the acute Commentator, now elevated above critical commendation, of Horace’s Art of Poetry. Dr. Hurd makes Addison talk, in a conversation with Arbuthnot and Digby, at Kenelworth Castle, as well as he could in his own person, and like a Whig. The Dialogue is important. The subject is the idea of the golden reign of Queen Elizabeth, which Addison is made to explain ; and then our admiration and wonder of those times is

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much abated.—But the death of Warburton is become the life of Addison; for Mr. Hayley, whose explanatory notes are as pleasing as his poetry, has defended him against that able despôt in literature. Even our Aristarchus Bentley compliments Addison with the title of the *ingenious Gentleman*, as the Commentator on Paradise Lost. But Warburton, at the end of his preface to Shakspeare, seems to think of him more contemptuously. Mr. Hayley thus pronounces, now without fear or danger, that “Addison, though insulted by the Commentator of Pope, with the names of an indifferent poet and a worse critic, was as much superior to his insulter in critical taste and in solidity of judgment, as he confessedly was in the harmony of his style, and in all the finer graces of beautiful composition.” If feeling or sentiment is not only the surest, but the ultimate arbiter of works of genius, Addison was not wanting in one of the critical qualifications. Whether he possessed the three endowments necessary for an accomplished critic in the supreme degree; namely, strong understanding, lively imagination, and

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refined sensibility, the pertness of this pen shall not dertermine. The first, according to Mr. Hayley, belongs to Aristotle, the others to Longinus indisputably, whom Addison admires, and therefore means to imitate. The excellent translator of the Sublime (Dr. Smith) exclaims in this apostrophe—"but what a tedious interval is there between Longinus and Mr. Addison! He has not professedly drawn his criticism from the principles of human nature, as the late Lord Kaims has done. But he descended from the heights, and wrote so successfully to the understanding of his readers, that, to use a certain oratorical metaphor, *he hit them between wind and water*. No author has done more, in the language of Shaftesbury on Locke's Essay, "to bring criticism into good company."

Perhaps no two men possessed *wit* and *humour* in a higher degree than Addison and Swift. *Wit* was most predominant in Swift, and *Humour* in Addison. The sharp point of the one was levelled at the man; of the other, at the vice or folly. One meant to reform, the other to chastise. If the raillery of the

one became now and then personal, which is confessed by Steele to be the case, on some of the wittiest men of the age ; the satire of the other was directed to the species. One meant to dignify, the other to degrade human nature. The one was sometimes indecent, indelicate, and even prophane ; the other was always religious, always modest — *and always said the very thing he ought*. If both had readers and hearers, one only was loved, the other was but admired and worshipped through fear. The one was never in a bad temper ; the other seldom in a good one. Wit is allowed to be a dangerous weapon in the possession of an ill-natured person. “ I am sorry,” says South, insultingly, to Sherlock, “ it has not pleased God to give you wit :” with which he triumphed over every body in the last century. Steele *feels himself bold* when he tells Swift in a letter, “ I am neither afraid of your wit, nor my Lord Treasurer’s power.” Addison endeavours to reclaim by expostulation, by harmless irony, and by letting you see your errors in a true mirror : Swift meant to expose you to yourself, and presented for that

that purpose a Gorgon's head to your imagination, and thought he had not done enough till he had written down your fame and fortune, as was the case with Wood and Bettisworth. A vertigo snatched the pen out of his hand, before he had finished his Legion Club. Into what a pandemonium does he convert the Irish parliament! Addison, like Horace, exhibits himself with smiles, "but gives the dangerous passes when he smiles." The other, to use a strong expression of Johnson, "bites like a viper, and would be glad to leave inflammation and gangrene behind him." This transcriber, for half of the performance consists of quotation, is struck with the vigour of an expression of Warburton's, in a letter to Dr. Birch, and preserved by Maty, in his excellent periodical Review, which threatens to as much purpose as Swift has done. "I shall hang him and his fellows as they do vermin in a warren, and leave them to posterity to stick and blacken in the wind; and this will I do, was the pope himself their protector."

The judgement of Mercury, in Lyttelton's Dialogues, on Addison and Swift, as wits and
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not as men, displays many a *shade* of difference in the cast of their minds. The decree runs to this purpose, "When a hero is brought hither who wants to be humbled, let the task of lowering his arrogance be assigned to Swift. The same office may be done to a philosopher, vain of his wisdom and virtue, or to a bigot, puffed up with spiritual pride. I would have him apply his *anticosmetic* wash to the painted face of female vanity; and his rod, which draws blood at every stroke, to the hard back of insolent folly, or petulant wit. But Addison should be employed to comfort those whose delicate minds are dejected with too painful a sense of their nature. To them he should hold his fair and charitable *mirror*, which would bring to their sight their hidden excellences, and put them in a temper fit for elysium."

Plutarch, that great comparer of characters, could not have determined better than Lyttelton, through the mouth of Mercury.

The only portrait of Addison is from a picture by Kneller, painted for the Kit Cat Club, and was in the possession of Tonson at Barn-Elms. Old Jacob was their secretary, and disliked

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ed Addison, whose works have been a fortune to those of his name. It is reported that Addison's address was very awkward. Possibly his dancing-master might say of him, as the famous French one does of the Treasurer Oxford, in a volume of Swift, that "he could make nothing of him." What Montaigne says of himself, Addison might appropriate: "In dancing, tennis, or wrestling, I could never arrive at any excellence; in swimming, fencing, vaulting, and leaping, to none at all." He was born for nobler and better purposes. He was born for others. But he must have had some uncommon qualifications to have enabled him *principibus placuisse viris*. Pope relates to Spence, that his conversation had a charm in it, beyond any one's he ever knew. His conversation, says the early writer of *memoirs* of his life, was so engaging, that they who once tasted it, would desire no other. The idea of excellence in these lines,

"Blest with each talent, and each art to please,
And born to write, converse, and live with ease,"

is given with a great drawback upon his
whole

whole merit, in the description of Atticus. "For my part, says Lord Chesterfield, I used to think myself in company as much above me, when I was with Mr. Addison and Mr. Pope, as if I had been with all the Princes in Europe."

It will cost the reader little to be told, before it is too late, that politics occasioned Addison to oppose himself to Prior, in defence of Garth, and also the Whigs—Garth, in his *Dispensary*, has this line,

"And crowns th' immortal brows of Addison :"

When our panegyrised poet had the opportunity, he defended a poem of Garth's to Lord Treasurer Godolphin. He finishes what he has to say, in favour of his friend, that he who shall assert that the writer of the *Dispensary* was no poet, will suddenly undertake to shew that he who gained the battle at Blenheim is no General. Perhaps the contempt of Addison for Prior might provoke the latter to write, at the end of his *Alma* :

"For Plato's fancies what care I ?
I hope you would not have me die,
Like *simple* Cato in the play,
For any thing that he can say ?"

Prior,

Prior, the depressed Tory, probably means a sneer on Addison, the triumphant Whig. "The Deuce take party!" says Swift to Pope.

The precipitation of this pen has forgot two or three particulars. From the communication of Tonson, who informed Garrick, Mr. Addison is declared to be the author of the Epilogue to the Distressed Mother. It is said to have been printed off with his name. He permitted it to pass for the composition of Budgell, who called himself a relation, and whom he wanted to recommend to a place, by the merit of these verses. It continues to be spoken after the tragedy; the only instance of the recitation of an old epilogue in the theatrical chronicle. Addison assisted Budgell in the translation of the Characters of Theophrastus. For, after his commendation and recommendation of it, in the volume of the Lover, he surely could not be the translator himself.

Addison composed materials for his entertaining dialogues on medals, whilst he continued at Vienna. They were not published in his life-time. Spence, who pursued Addison's idea in his Polymetis, says, that when he told Ficorini, the celebrated virtuoso, at

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Florence,

Florence, that Addison composed a volume on the subject of Medals, he was surprized, for, says he, "I never gave him above twenty lectures." A good master, perhaps, and an apt scholar !

To hasten to the conclusion of this Essay, Addison's moral character was unimpeached. His integrity in office was never called in question. He took his salary, and all lawful perquisites, and excused nobody. The following passage shews the purity of his conduct, and may be of use to all men in office. Addison may be believed on his own affirmation, as soon as Cato was without an oath. "I never did, nor ever will, on any pretence whatsoever, says he in a letter to Major Dunbar, take more than the stated and customary fees of my office. I might keep the contrary practice concealed from the world, were I capable of it, but I could not from myself. And I hope I shall always fear the reproaches of my own heart more than those of all-mankind." A noble declaration of Lord Coke runs across the mind, which shall be revived to the reader. "I thank God, that I never gave my body to physic,
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my heart to cruelty, or my hand to corruption."

Addison was a sound Whig, and probably had to bear the censures of the Tories, whom in the shape of foxhunters and country gentlemen he now and then sported with. Had he lived longer he would have continued a greater blessing. No man, in so short a life, had done more service to his country, which he perpetuates through all generations.

Dr. Birch, in his *Lives*, in that elegant English folio, called the *Houbraken heads*, thus finishes his short account of Addison. "His writings, which will be always esteemed as the best standard of our language and taste, render all encomiums upon him unnecessary. His modesty was so excessive, that it disabled him from appearing to any advantage in the public scenes of business or in mixed companies: but, among a few select friends, the vivacity and elegance of his conversation were incomparable."

The essayist continues the liberty to pull "*from every bird a feather.*" This half line
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is taken from his friend Mr. Colman's new translation of Horace's Art of Poetry. The popular author shines in this publication, as a poet and a critic. The forwardness of this pen is eager to get the start of all others in commendation of this performance.

Swift, Addison, and Bolingbroke, are the triumvirate of Lord Orrery, for elegant and polite expression. Addison was one of the few who left the world better than he found it. As a writer of taste, the following words of Plato have been happily applied to him, in a letter of Fitz-Osborne, "the Graces, having searched all the world round for a temple wherein they might for ever dwell, settled at last in the breast of Mr. Addison."



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